

## **Addendum to “Better Health Care for Colorado” Service Employees International Union**

SEIU submits this addendum to its “Better Health Care for Colorado” reform proposal to provide information that has become relevant after the date on which our proposal was submitted.

### **Long Term Care Reform**

The population of Coloradans requiring access to long term care is at the beginning of a massive expansion. SEIU presented recommendations for improvement of Colorado’s long term care system to efficiently accommodate this growth with the provision of quality services in the least-restrictive setting possible. However, the Lewin Group did not perform economic modeling for significant portions of SEIU’s long term care recommendations, including: cost effective rate setting, an increase in access to affordable housing for long term care consumers and an implementation of a strategy to maximize access to home and community based services. We urge the state policy makers to consider these measures in order to offer consumers a true choice in where they receive long term care services, and to enable the state to administer services in a cost-effective fashion that promotes quality.

In addition, SEIU recommends that state policymakers consider and, as appropriate, act upon the recommendations of the committees created by Senate Bill 05-173 and House Bill 07-1374. Many of the recommendations of the 173 committee were contained in the long term care section of our proposal, and the 1374 group finished its work in December of 2007. We would like to highlight one common theme from the recommendations of these groups – Colorado needs to better coordinate the funding and program administration of long term care services among the various agencies and stakeholders in the system. We believe this should be a fundamental first step in preparing Colorado for the spike in demand that is already upon us.

### **Cost Transparency**

As has become increasingly apparent during the Blue Ribbon Commission’s modeling process, cost – both in terms of costs to individual consumers and in terms of the total cost associated with covering all Coloradans – is a major factor in the equation of health care reform. Parallel to Blue Ribbon process here in Colorado, we have seen that comprehensive health care reform efforts in other states has not yet managed to adequately tame the spiraling cost of health care. To enable the accurate examination of cost, SEIU recommends that Colorado implements public policy that engenders a greater level of cost transparency from both providers and insurance carriers. The yielding of this information will be essential if our state is to intelligently tackle the challenge of skyrocketing costs in our health care system.